

WINTER 1998-99

NEWS BRIEF

Neighborhood Networks

U.S. Department of Housing
and Urban Development
Office of Housing-Multifamily
www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org

"Neighborhood Networks centers are getting entire communities involved in a grassroots effort to help residents find jobs and real opportunity. It's great to see so many property owners and managers, residents and community partners across the country working together for a common good."

- HUD Secretary
Andrew Cuomo

Get Involved in Neighborhood Networks

The Neighborhood Networks conferences offered opportunities to find out more about the initiative. To learn how you can participate in Neighborhood Networks efforts nationally and in your local community, contact the **Neighborhood Networks Information Center** toll-free at **(888) 312-2743** or visit the website at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org.

Owner and Manager Focus Groups Address Neighborhood Networks Participation

Neighborhood Networks staff learned more about how property owners and managers around the country view the initiative through several focus groups this summer.

Held in Houston, Boston and San Francisco, the focus groups included owners and managers with operational Neighborhood Networks centers, as well as owners and managers not yet involved in the initiative. The goal of the sessions was to learn about Neighborhood Networks successes and explore how the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) could reach uninvolved owners and managers. Currently, more than 440 Neighborhood Networks centers have opened on privately owned HUD-supported properties. Centers usually offer computer access, staff assistance and a range of training resources.

"I found the process to be rewarding in providing [HUD] with realistic information about how the [initiative] works and what its future may be," said Dean Newton, executive director of the East Texas Affordable Housing Management Association (AHMA), who participated in the Houston focus group.

A final focus group report addresses how HUD can use local lessons learned to increase the initiative's impact nationwide. Some initial report findings include:

1. Properties with Neighborhood Networks centers attract tenants who are more motivated to participate in the socioeconomic mainstream. This, combined with the federal preferences waiver that broke up concentrations of very low-income families

in assisted housing, creates a strong mixed-income tenant population for the property.

2. Neighborhood Networks centers foster greater opportunities for residents' personal development, which has a positive impact on the property. Participants reported:

- Graffiti is reduced. Kids are no longer "hanging out" on the property, but are in the centers learning.
- Residents complain less about their environment and are more focused on improving themselves.
- Resident involvement in community activities increases.

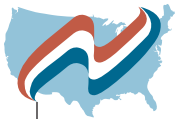
3. Neighborhood Networks centers reduce the stigma of assisted housing. While collaborating on center programs, neighbors, partners and residents develop mutually beneficial relationships. As a result, the community views the property more positively.

4. Focus group participants recommended the following changes in Neighborhood Networks:

- Minimize the emphasis placed on computers and increase the emphasis on expanding resident self-sufficiency.
- Redefine the job of a Resident Service Coordinator to help the community become self-sufficient. Coordinators typically help residents obtain services.
- Increase opportunities for Neighborhood Networks center staff to understand the complex issues involving welfare to work, such as child care, transportation and job training.

Neighborhood Networks staff is convening a working group in Washington, DC of industry representatives and real estate executives to develop policy recommendations. Interested owners and managers can contact Janet Maccubbin of Neighborhood Networks at **(888) 312-2743**.

The quarterly Neighborhood Networks News Brief highlights achievements for an audience including partners and the public.



Neighborhood Networks Joins National Panel Exploring Impact of Technology on Education

The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) is taking a look outside traditional classroom learning — and is involving Neighborhood Networks in the process.

Innovative use of technology can produce successful educational results, according to participants in a recent DOE national videoconference. Panelists described nontraditional learning programs ranging from early childhood centers' use of educational television to distance learning programs using satellite communication in correctional facilities. Community Technology Centers' Network (CTCNet) founder Antonia Stone explained how CTCNet and Neighborhood Networks center programs use technology to advance adult basic education, job preparation and job training. CTCNet is a national network of centers providing access to computers and computer-related technology.

"Recent CTCNet research clearly indicates that community technology centers are effective in helping to bridge the 'digital divide' that threatens to cut off low-income and minority Americans from the benefits of the information-communications age," said Stone.

However, funding for "alternative" learning environments such as Neighborhood Networks and CTCNet centers will not be widely available through DOE federal and state monies, according to John Doyle, vice chair of the Committee on Finance at the West Virginia House of Delegates.

"The good news is that the Department of Education has clearly taken an interest in what is being done outside its normal funding arena," said Stone, who encourages organizations to provide DOE with statistical and anecdotal information that supports federal investment in community technology-based learning centers.

In addition to Stone and Doyle, panelists included Dr. Chris Dede, professor of Technology Engineering and Education at George Mason University; Dr. Dorothy Singer, co-director of the Yale University Family Television Research and Consultation Center; and Ann Kulinsky, distance education instructor with the Correctional Education Service in Spokane, WA.

For more information about the teleconference, contact Barbara Humes at the U.S. Department of

Education at (202) 219-1376 or by e-mail at barbara_humes@ed.gov.

CENTER NEWSLINE

Focus on Job Training Programs

Neighborhood Networks centers nationwide have developed successful job training programs that help residents achieve self-sufficiency. Centers generally agree that effective programs target resident needs and rely on strong employer partnerships. A few examples:

- **Northport and Packer Community Learning Centers (NPP)** in **Madison, WI**, focuses on adult education and job training with its Career Connections program. The center provides needs-based job training and partners with employers committed to hiring residents. For more information, contact Director Carmen Porco at (608) 255-2759.
- **Greenbrier Enrichment Center (GEC)**, in **Columbus, OH**, relies on volunteers to provide about 3,000 residents with basic education, job placement and job retention services. The Residents Off Welfare—Teaching, Educating, Achieving, Motivating, Success (ROW TEAMS) program attributes its success to unique employer partnerships and strong resident involvement. Contact Director John Gregory at (614) 239-7788 for more information.
- **Oakridge Neighborhood Services**, in **Des Moines, IA**, offers job readiness and computer training to about 800 residents through its "Success" program. The program offers social services to help residents address life issues before seeking employment. For more information, contact Adult Program Coordinator Rebecca Trimble at (515) 244-7702, Ext. 121.

For additional resources, call the **Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll-free at (888) 312-2743**, or visit the website at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org.



Success Stories Behind the Blue Ribbon Awards

The following Neighborhood Networks center activities contributed to communities across the country and were among those honored with HUD's 1998 John J. Gunther Blue Ribbon Best Practice Award. The Awards were announced by HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo at a U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting and recognized at recent national Neighborhood Networks conferences.

- Cited for neighborhood transformation, the **Smoketown Neighborhood Networks Computer Learning Center** in **Louisville** provides adult education, GED training, job placement and computer literacy to more than 290 residents at three neighboring housing communities.
- **The Grove Neighborhood Network at the Island Grove Village Apartments** in **Greeley, Colorado** uses innovative job training software - the Invest Learning System - to offer career information and other job resources.
- Following the devastating April 1997 floods, the **Neighborhood Networks LaGrave Learning Center** in **Grand Forks, North Dakota** has assisted ongoing recovery efforts. The city of Grand Forks has used center computers to keep track of disaster relief funds and donations.
- Through partnerships with VISTA and local colleges, among others, the **Interfaith Homes Neighborhood Networks Center** in **Kalamazoo, Michigan** provides GED classes, computer training, Internet access, job



Neighborhood Networks National Field Director Charles Famuliner stands with Bill Dean, Executive Director, Wheatland Community Learning Center in Dallas, and HUD Neighborhood Networks Coordinators Darlene Fete and Charles Wilson, who were recognized in Atlanta on behalf of centers.

preparedness, youth services and more to about 250 children and 200 adults.

- Community youth attend Teen Summit meetings at the **Martin Luther King Neighborhood Networks Computer Center** in **Detroit**. Topics range from teen pregnancy to conflict resolution. Partnerships include the Detroit Urban League, Detroit Public School System, the Detroit Police Department and the nonprofit Safe Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP).
- Low-income individuals are finding jobs through the **Dallas Neighborhood Networks Collaboration (DNNC)**, a coalition of four HUD-assisted housing properties with centers. Participants completing center programs will be offered entry-level jobs at the Bank of America.
- **The Grier Park and Hillcrest Apartments Neighborhood Networks Center** in **Charlotte, NC**, helped revitalize a community once ranked 13th in violent crime among 74 central city neighborhoods in Charlotte. Residents work with the Charlotte Police Department, Central Piedmont Community College and Charlotte City Schools, among others.
- An on-site nurse helps ensure that residents receive appropriate quality care at the **Neighborhood Networks Health Care Demonstration at the Orchard Mews Apartments** in **Baltimore**. The nonprofit Multi-Family Initiatives (MFI) managing the program has partnered with Chase Brexton Health Services to provide addictions counseling.



Neighborhood Networks National Field Director Charles Famuliner (right) stands with HUD's Janice Page; Thom Mahoney, Technical Supervisor, Island Grove Neighborhood Networks Center in Greeley, CO; and HUD's Deanna Beaudoin, who were recognized in Phoenix on behalf of centers.



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NEWS BRIEF

Sharing Successes, Connecting Communities, Moving Forward: Neighborhood Networks Conference Highlights

A total of more than 800 property owners and managers, residents, center staff, partners, volunteers and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) staff joined together to look at where Neighborhood Networks has been and explore how to help the initiative flourish at a national conference held in September in Phoenix and Atlanta.

The 1998 Neighborhood Networks Conference – “Sharing Successes, Connecting Communities,

Moving Forward” – marked the three-year anniversary of Neighborhood Networks. The conferences provided training and resources for participants that help develop and maintain Neighborhood Networks centers in their communities.

“The strong attendance and participation at the 1998 Neighborhood Networks conferences shows the

support and enthusiasm that is behind this community-based initiative,” said HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo. “It is encouraging to see many diverse neighborhoods, groups and individuals joining with HUD in an effort that is providing residents opportunities to change their lives.”

Conference attendees participated in a mix of plenary sessions, training workshops and discussion panels on key Neighborhood Networks goals and topics including technology, center development and sustainability, microenterprise creation, job training and readiness, health care, social services and education. An inspirational session included speakers who shared personal experiences about how their local Neighborhood Networks center helped them make the transition from “welfare to work.”

Other key speakers included Brian Callahan, vice president, computing and online services for *WHRO-TV*, the PBS affiliate serving Hampton Roads, Virginia. He spoke in Atlanta about the important role technology plays in education and employability. Phoenix keynote speaker Robert Yang of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) discussed sharing information and emerging technologies with Neighborhood Networks centers.

Charlie Famuliner, National Field Director for the Neighborhood Networks initiative, hosted both conferences. Reba Cook, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for HUD’s Multifamily Housing Programs, galvanized the crowd in both cities with her vision for the initiative’s future, which includes HUD’s strong ongoing commitment to Neighborhood Networks.

Among the many key HUD staff who helped make the conferences possible: Sally Thomas, Director of the Multifamily Housing Division in the Arizona HUD office; Robert W. Reavis, Jr., Director of the HUD Multifamily Housing Division in Georgia; Brenda Mull, Chief, Asset Management Branch for HUD’s Office of Housing in Georgia; and Ann Kizzier and Raynold Richardson, who coordinate conferences and training for Neighborhood Networks.

To learn more about the Neighborhood Networks conferences, or to be included in a mailing list for future conferences, please call the **Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll-free at (888) 312-2743** or visit the website at **www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org**. The website includes an overall conference summary, daily conference summaries with photographs, an agenda combining both conferences with links to presentation materials and speaker biographies, and a photo montage from each conference.



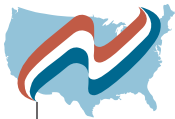
Neighborhood Networks conference participants gather for lunch in Atlanta.

HUD Neighborhood Networks

HUD Neighborhood Networks NEWS BRIEF

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Calendar of Events

NEWS BRIEF

January 14-17, 1999

U.S. Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (USASBE)

13th Annual National Conference

San Diego, CA, The Bahia Hotel

Phone: (706) 227-2544

Fax: (706) 542-3743

Website: www.USASBE.org

E-mail: mmeeks@usasbe.org

January 21-23, 1999

Families USA Foundation

Annual Grassroots Conference

Washington, DC

Phone: (202) 628-3030

Fax: (202) 347-2417

Website: www.familiesusa.org/CONFHTM

E-mail: info@familiesusa.org

January 26-27, 1999

Philanthropy News Network

Nonprofits and Technology Conference

Seattle, WA

Phone: (919) 832-2325

Fax: (919) 833-4238

Website: conference.pj.org/cities.htm

February 10-11, 1999

International Council for Caring Communities, Inc.

Caring Communities for the 21st Century (1999 International Year of Older Persons Conference)

New York, NY, United Nations Headquarters

Contact: Nancy Lewis

Phone: (212) 688-4321

Fax: (212) 759-5893

Website: www.un.org/events/agingcf.htm

E-mail: iccc@undp.org

February 18-19, 1999

Philanthropy News Network

Nonprofits and Technology Conference

New York, NY

Phone: (919) 832-2325

Fax: (919) 833-4238

Website: conference.pj.org/cities.htm

March 3-6, 1999

National Crime Prevention Council-USA

12th National Youth Crime Prevention Conference

Denver, CO, Adam's Mark Hotel

Contact: Lisa Lybbert

Phone: (202) 261-4152

Fax: (202) 296-1356

Website: www.ncpc.org/youthcon

E-mail: lybbert@ncpc.org

March 4-7, 1999

American Society on Aging

45th Annual Meeting

Orlando, FL, Disney's Coronado Springs Resort

Contact: Shelley McHugh

Phone: (415) 974-9644

Fax: (415) 974-0300

Website: www.asaging.org/am/am.html

March 7-9, 1999

National Council for Urban Economic Development

Washington Briefing: Economic Development Summit

Washington, DC, Omni Shoreham Hotel

Contact: Kate Fullerton

Phone: (202) 223-4735

Fax: (202) 223-4745

Website: www.cued.org



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